

PH0369543

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 23 1976
DATE ENTERED DEC 12 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC U.S. Courthouse, Post Office and Customs House  
 AND/OR COMMON U.S. Federal Building

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER Main Street at Second Street  NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CITY, TOWN Newport  VICINITY OF District of Vermont  
STATE Vermont CODE 50 COUNTY Orleans CODE 019

**2 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

STREET & NUMBER 18th & F Streets, NW  
CITY, TOWN Washington,  VICINITY OF District of Columbia STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Municipal Building  
STREET & NUMBER 72 Main Street  
CITY, TOWN Newport STATE Vermont

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey  
DATE 1974  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Vermont Division for Historic Preservation  
CITY, TOWN Montpelier STATE Vermont

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Newport Federal Building, originally the U.S. Courthouse, Post Office, and Customs House, was completed in 1904 from designs of the office of James Knox Taylor, Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury Department from 1897 to 1912. Located at the southwest corner of Main and Second Streets, the building is set back slightly from the streets and is separated from adjacent buildings by alleys.

The building, measuring 75'4" by 57'4", rises four storeys above a full basement. All facades have five bays. The hipped roof has three small dormers on the front elevation and two dormers flanking an elevator pent-house on the rear. The building is constructed of loadbearing masonry with solid slab floors on concrete beams. The basement is sheathed in granite ashlar, the first storey in "light clouded marble from Rutland, Vermont,"<sup>1</sup> and the remaining three storeys in red brick laid in Flemish bond. Keystones and sills are of white marble and the hipped roof of slate. The building's cornice is composed of a moulding, dentil course, and carved brackets under the eaves, which are accentuated by dark gutters. In 1930, a small one-storey addition of cream colored brick was constructed on the west.

On the principal (north or Main Street) facade the first storey above grade functions as a visual basement, the second as a mezzanine, and the third and fourth, as a double-height piano nobile. However, a certain visual ambiguity of organization results from the articulation of the third and fourth storeys in the outermost bays. A second mezzanine exists at the fourth storey level flanking the central double height courtroom lit by the large windows of the three central bays.

On all facades the basement is articulated only by grilled windows, which conform to the bay system above, and by an off-set marked by a torus moulding. The deeply banded rusticated marble facing of the first storey directly surmounts the granite torus moulding. Each first storey window is composed of a single movable two light sash with a vertical glazing bar and a two light transom. Each window surmounts a stone apron resting directly on the torus moulding and is in turn surmounted by a flat-arch with voussoirs and a faceted keystone which continue the rustication. A strongly projecting moulded stone string course rests directly on the keystones and supports another lighter string course and a belt course, which function as a sill course for the second storey. The brickwork of the second, third and fourth floors rests directly without moulding on this uppermost course.

On the second storey of the principal facade, the outermost bays each contain a flat-arched window with the same glazing configuration as below. The window is enframed by brick quoining and is surmounted by a tripartite keystone with a projecting center element which, while smaller and shallower in projection, reverberates the composition of the first storey keystones. Surmounting a stone sill another somewhat shorter flat-arched window with a similarly glazed single sash and two light transom marks the third storey in the outermost bays.

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This window is enframed by a similar surround, and is surmounted by a simple stone keystone with a recessed panel. The top of this keystone abuts the sill of the fourth storey window. The transition from the third to the fourth storey is marked by a brick belt course which extends the brick quoining at the corners of the facade horizontally to meet the sills of these fourth storey windows and continues on to meet similar quoining of the next bay inward. Thus the effect is to form two recessed panels in each outermost bay, one encompassing the second and third storeys and the other, the fourth storey. The fourth storey windows in each outermost bay are French doors, of approximately the same height as the third storey windows, flat-arched, with no keystones. Shallow wrought iron balconies rest on projecting sills supported by brackets.

In each of the three center bays of the principal facade, the second storey window is flat-arched with three casements, the central one larger than the flanking ones, and a three light transom. The window area in each of the middle three bays is recessed and is flanked by a brick quoining pattern that defines the wall plane of the second, third, and fourth storeys. On each of these bays, a brick apron of herring-bone bond separates the second and third storey windows. In the center of each panel is a black marble roundel. In each of the three center bays of the third storey is a large double height, flat-arched window. The windows provide light to the two storey third floor courtroom. Each is composed of three zones; the lower has twin casements; the middle, four fixed lights; and the top, an oculus with two side lights. A bell curve moulding separates the top and middle zones and with an oculus forms a single ornamental element. The keystone surmounted directly by the cornice is a moulded scroll and festoon. Above the three central bays on the roof are bull's eye dormers which reverberate the oculi and the roundels below.

The central entrance bay is articulated at the first storey level by a staircase of six risers. On podia flanking the staircase stand cast iron post lamps with four globes in a pyramidal configuration. On the rustication to the east of the door were applied letters:

United States Post Office  
And Custom House  
Newport, Vermont

The first two lines have been removed and replaced:

Federal Building  
Newport, Vermont

U.S. Courthouse, Post Office and Customs House, Newport, Vermont

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Although the original door has been replaced, the original transom remains; a glass panel decorated with a grille of fish scale pattern. A cast iron and glass marquee, installed in 1909, has a visible hipped roof and is supported by ornate scrolled brackets. Surmounting the marquee is a railing terminated at the four corners by posts and finials. Marking the center of the front railing is a circular element incorporating the letters, "U.S."

On the west facade of the building, most of the original first storey is obscured by the addition of 1930. The five bays of the second, third, and fourth storeys are like the outermost bays of the principal facade with the exception of the outermost bays of the fourth storey. There the balconies and French doors are replaced by marble roundels.

The east (Second Street) facade of the building is virtually identical to the original west facade. The two outermost bays of the first storey, not visible on the west facade, are here fenestrated in a manner identical to that of the corresponding bays of the principal facade. A staircase of ten risers leads to the doorway which is flanked by metal sconces. Surmounting the door is a panel decorated with a grille of fish scale pattern. A marquee similar to but smaller than that of the principal facade occurs above the entrance.

Each bay of the rear (south) facade but the center one is identical to the outermost bays of the principal facade. On the roof surmounting each bay flanking the center one is a bull's eye dormer identical to those of the principal facade. The original central third dormer has been replaced by an elevator penthouse. In the center bay at the first storey, the window opening is identical to the other bays except that it is partially filled with marble ashlar and contains a small single-light window. This window has an undecorated projecting sill, flat arch and tripartite keystone.

From the level of the second storey sill to mid-level of the fourth storey, the central bay is slightly recessed and surrounded with brick quoining. The recessed area has a flat arch and an ornamental keystone identical to those of the central bays of the principal facade and is surmounted directly by the cornice. A small window with a marble keystone, like that of the first storey, surmounts the uppermost stone course of the first storey. This window is flanked by brick laid in herringbone bond enframed by a decorative brick quoining pattern, all within the recessed central bay.

U.S. Courthouse, Post Office and Customs House, Newport, Vermont

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Bearing directly on the keystone of the small window is a marble spandrel, which in turn is surmounted by a tripartite window the full width of the bay composed of three casements with a three-light transom. This window lights the staircase landing between the second and third storeys. It is surmounted by a moulded marble spandrel whose circular center section reverberates the motif of the principal facade fenestration. Above the spandrel is a tripartite window consisting of three single-light casements.

The 1930 addition is composed of two unequal bays on the north facade, each defined by three brick pilasters. The easternmost bay has a modern door. The westernmost bay originally was an opening with a loading dock. In 1967 the opening was bricked in. A projecting roof held by tie rods remains. The west facade of the addition is composed of three bays, defined by four brick pilasters, wider than those of the north and south facades. Originally the bays contained larger windows. At present the center bay is bricked in and the two outer bays contain six over six double-hung sash windows surmounted by wood panels.

The local Express and Standard newspaper described the original interior of 1904 just after completion:

'Each entrance has massive sliding oak doors' also beautiful turnstile doors. You enter upon terrazzo floors, with Swanton marble borders... the corridors and post office floors are of maple; all other floors are of George pine... the first, second, and third storey finish is of fine quartered oak, stained and finished dull. The fourth storey and basement are finished in Georgia pine... The door and window trimmings are all polished brass. The glass throughout the building is plate; the toilet room windows and all glass top doors are frosted... the building is thoroughly lighted by electricity and is also piped for gas. There are 84 chandeliers, besides many bracket lights, making in all 250 lights.'

The interior has been extensively altered over the years. The 1930 construction that added the west mailing vestibule included a complete remodeling of the public lobby and work area. When the Post Office moved from the building in 1967, the interior was again remodeled. Much of the original fabric has been removed or covered with modern construction. An elevator now occupies the space around which the monumental main staircase winds.

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Notes

<sup>1</sup>The photograph, drawings and manuscript collection of the U.S. Federal Building, General Services Administration, Newport, Vermont.

<sup>2</sup>"New Federal Building, Newport, Vermont", Express and Standard (Newport, Vermont), April 29, 1904.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1903-1904

BUILDER/ARCHITECT James Knox Taylor

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The U.S. Federal Building is the tallest and most distinguished building in Newport. With its elaborate and mannered ornamentation, the building bespeaks the architect's interest in making an imposing statement of the Federal Government's presence in a small isolated town near the Canadian border. Sharing a block with the Orleans County Courthouse and standing opposite the Municipal Building and Public Library, the Federal Building provides a focus to the political and cultural center of town. Moreover, it has acquired local landmark status by serving for over seventy years as the site of all Federal activity in Newport. It's location just five miles from the Canadian border and its resultant custom facilities add the dimension of international activity and importance to the historic function of the U.S. Federal Building in northern Vermont.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Express and Standard, April 29, 1904, "New Federal Building, Newport, Vt."  
Goodrich Memorial Library, Newport, Vermont.

Collection of manuscripts, blueprints and photographs at the Federal Building, Newport, Vermont.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1.52

UTM REFERENCES  
 A 187200090 4979125

A	1	8	7	20	0	0	9	0	4	9	7	9	1	2	5
	ZONE			EASTING			NORTHING			B					
C									D						
	ZONE			EASTING			NORTHING								

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE  
General Services Administration

ORGANIZATION  
Historic Preservation

STREET & NUMBER  
19th & F Streets., NW

CITY OR TOWN  
Washington, DC

**12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION**

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION  
 YES  NO  NONE

*William B. Pinney*  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is  National  State  Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE *Michael S. Sullivan*

TITLE Historic Preservation Officer DATE 8.17.76

FOR NPS USE ONLY	I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	DATE	<u>12/12/96</u>
ACTING DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	<i>[Signature]</i>	DATE	<u>12/4/76</u>
ATTEST:		DATE	
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER			